

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first indebtedness is to Mr. E. D. Cutting who sent me the 1967 specimen. The Kennardington specimen came to me through the kindness of Dr. N. F. Ticehurst, while for the series of Dutch specimens I am indebted to Mr. P. A. Hens. I am also grateful to Dr. Jeffery Harrison with whom I have discussed the implications of the cases, and who read through the M.S. Dr. J. S. Ash has also been kind enough to read the typescript and proffer valuable suggestions and comments. Mr. F. C. Sawyer was good enough to establish a reference for me. I am most grateful to Dr. Pamela Harrison for the photographs of the specimens, and to Mr. J. D. Macdonald, of the British Museum (Natural History), for making the series of this mutation available to me for study.

## References:

- Ash, J. S., 1966: Some mutations of the Partridge and Red-legged Partridge. *Brit. Birds*. 59: 15, 22.
- Hachisuka, M., 1928. Variation among Birds. *Supplementary Publication of the Ornithological Society of Japan*. Nos. 34-36, Plate XII.
- Latham, J., 1823. *General History of Birds*, 8. 286, 287.
- Ogilvie-Grant, W. R., 1895. *A Handbook to the Game Birds*. 147, 148, Plate XII. Fig. I. Allen's Naturalists' Library Vol. I.
- Ogilvie-Grant, W. R. and Rothschild, W. 1915, The Exhibition of a series of abnormally coloured partridges. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 35: 45-47.
- Harrison, J. M., 1953. On the significance of variations in pattern in birds. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 73: 37-40.

On the nominate race of *Pogonocichla stellata* (Vieillot)

by P. A. CLANCEY

Received 20th December, 1967

The nominate race of the Starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata* (Vieillot), 1818: Plettenberg Bay, southern Cape Province, of southern and eastern Africa, is currently believed to extend from the southern Cape Province north-east to southern Zululand. North of this, in southern Africa, it is replaced by *P. s. lebombo* Roberts, 1935: Ingwavuma, Lebombo Mts., north-eastern Zululand, and *P. s. transvaalensis* (Roberts), 1912: Woodbush Forest, Tzaneen, northern Transvaal. Moreau (1951) recognises only nominate *stellata* and *transvaalensis* in zoogeographical South Africa, placing both *lebombo* and *P. s. chirindensis* (Roberts), 1914: Chirinda Forest, Mt. Selinda, Melssetter district, Rhodesia, as synonyms of the latter. Recently, Ripley (1964), Clancey (1966), and Clancey and Lawson (1967) have reinstated *lebombo* as discrete from *transvaalensis*. As shown by the last named authors, the back is green in *lebombo* as against bronze in *transvaalensis*.

In the southern African populations of this temperate forest element, variation affects the blue-grey of the head, the colour of the mantle, scapulars and rump, the intensity of the yellow of the underside and of the pale areas of the rectrices. Also, in some populations, the outer vanes of the bastard-wing and adjacent greater-coverts are edged with silvery white rather than bluish-grey. A careful study of a panel of 75 specimens of the populations occurring in evergreen forest from about Knysna, in

the southern Cape Province, north-east to Qudeni and Nkandhla, in southern Zululand, shows that the present nominate race of this robin must be split into two subspecies on the basis of well-defined colour differences in the adult stage. In place of the present *P. s. stellata* as laid down in my Catalogue (Clancey [1966]) the following revised arrangement of the populations is now proposed:

(a) ***Pogonocichla stellata stellata* (Vieillot).**

*Muscicapa stellata* Vieillot, *Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat.*, vol. xxi, 1818, p. 468: Plettenberg Bay, southern Cape Province.

Adult with head Slate Color (pl. liii [Ridgway, 1912]); rest of upper-side Warbler Green/Dark Citrine (pl. iv). Underside Lemon Chrome (pl. iv) with lateral wash of Light Cadmium. Tail with pale areas Buff-Yellow (pl. iv).

*Range:* Southern Cape Province from about Knysna, east to the interior temperate forests of the Transkei, in eastern Cape. Some birds are subject to movement to the north-east of this in winter, as it has been taken in the Ingeli Forest, Alfred County, Natal, at 5,000 ft. a.s.l. in early October (Durban Museum).

(b) ***Pogonocichla stellata margaritata* Sundevall, new race.**

*Pogonocichla margaritata* Sundevall, *Oefv. K. Sv. Vet.-Akad. Förhandl.*, vol. vii, 1850, p. 104: "Caffraria inferiore s. propria" the *Type* from upper Umgeni R., Natal (*vide* Gyldenstolpe, *Ibis*, 1934, p. 291 [see below]).

Adult darker over head than last (Blackish Slate [pl. liii]); rest of upper-side bronze rather than green (about Orange-Citrine [pl. iv]). On underparts orange as against Lemon Chrome (Cadmium Yellow [pl. ii]), and pale surfaces in rectrices more orange, less yellow (Light Orange-Yellow [pl. iii]). Similar in size.

*Range:* Coastal Pondoland and high level forests of East Griqualand to Natal and southern Zululand, reaching as far as the forests at Qudeni and Nkandhla. Some winter along the Natal and Zululand coast (mainly birds in prebasic dress).

*Note:* In *Ark. Zool.*, vol. 19A, 1926 p. 54, Gyldenstolpe gives the type-locality of *P. margaritata* as Pietermaritzburg, Natal. The reason for the correction eight years later to upper Umgeni R., the one adopted here, is not evident on the basis of the information given in either citation.

*P. s. lebombo*, with the head and ventral coloration of *P. s. margaritata* but with a greener dorsal surface and silvery white outer vanes to the bastard-wing and adjacent greater-coverts, is known from the Lebombo Mountains and coastal Moçambique from Lourenço Marques to the Limpopo R. mouth. *P. s. transvaalensis*, which is like *lebombo* but with the back bronze and not green, is a montane form which ranges in a chain of isolates from the Ngome Forest of north-western Zululand, through western Swaziland and the Transvaal to eastern Rhodesia in the highlands, and adjacent Moçambique.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the loan of additional material I am grateful to the Directors of the East London and Natal Museums.



## References:

- Clancey, P. A., 1966. "A Catalogue of Birds of the South African Sub-Region." Part III, *Durban Mus. Novit.*, vol. vii, 11, p. 455.  
 Clancey, P. A. and Lawson, W. J., 1967. *Ostrich*, vol. xxxviii, 3, p. 195.  
 Moreau, R. E., 1951. *Ibis*, vol. xciii, 3, pp. 383-401.  
 Ridgway, R., 1912. *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature*, Washington.  
 Ripley, S. Dillon, 1964. in Peters' *Check-List of Birds of the World*, vol. x, pp. 30-32.

## A frigate-bird off Yorkshire

by A. PATERSON

Received 13th February, 1968

At about noon on 15th October, 1966, I was watching seabirds at Filey Brigg on the north-east coast of England when I saw a bird larger than a Gannet, *Sula bassana* (of which some were present), and of a totally different shape and coloration, appearing at first to be entirely black and white, flying south into a strong southerly wind. From the time when I first saw it until it passed out of range I was able to watch through either a 20 X telescope or 7 x 50 binoculars for at least four minutes at distances down to 500 yards in a good light. The following field description is compiled from notes that I made at the time:—

The general shape was long and streamlined, with a forked tail that could be seen when the bird banked. The wing-span was large, somewhere in the range of 7½ feet, and the wings were long and backswept, appearing thicker around the carpal joint. All the upperparts were brown or black, and the chin was a pale grey, which extended down onto the throat. The breast and upper belly were white, and all the remaining underparts were dark brown or black. The bill was long and slightly curved with a noticeable hook, and a distinct coral pink in colour. The legs appeared a dark maroon. The flight was absolutely effortless into the wind, and I did not see a single flap.

At the time I thought that the bird must be a female Magnificent Frigate-bird *Fregata magnificens*, and I submitted a description and drawing of it claiming a record of that species to the 'British Birds' Rarities Committee, who rejected it without making any other suggestion as to what it might be. I am indebted to Dr. W. R. P. Bourne for assistance in further attempts to identify it, in which I have also been assisted by Mr. Eugene Eisenmann, M. Christian Jouanin and Dr. Bryan Nelson, who also agree that whatever its precise identity, it appears to have been some kind of frigate-bird *Fregata* sp. and I have been able to confirm this point since moving to the Bahamas, where I have seen many Magnificent Frigate-birds.

However, while clearly a frigate-bird, it does not appear to have been *Fregata magnificens*, the normal species of the North Atlantic, in which the bill and throat are normally dark, and while I have now seen a number of females of that species, none have had the bill other than bluish-horn. The species in which the females are most widely known to have red bills appear to be the Lesser Frigate-bird *Fregata ariel*, with a wide distribution in tropical seas other than the North Atlantic, and the Christmas Frigate-bird *Fregata andrewsi* of the East Indies, but both of these normally have dark chins, which is confirmed by Roger Pocklington (in a letter to Dr. Bourne) from experience of a large number at Christmas Island. In the